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SUBJECT: URUGUAY RESERVED ON SOUTH AMERICAN SECURITY
COUNCIL INITIATIVE

REF: STATE 52599

Classified By: Ambassador Frank E. Baxter
for reasons 1.4 (B) and (D)

¶1. (C) This telegram responds to refTel action request for information on insights into the views of host government officials on Brazil's proposed South American Defense Council (CSD) initiative prior to the May 23 South American Union of Nations (UNASUR) Summit in Brasilia.

¶2. (U) Local media reported mixed GOU reactions to Brazilian Minister of Defense (MOD) Nelson Jobim's push for CSD following his visit to Uruguay on May 15. Jobim met with Uruguayan MOD Jose Bayardi, ForMin Gonzalo Fernandez and key members of congress. National Party Senator (and former Foreign Minister) Sergio Abreu reportedly chastised Brazil for not supporting Uruguay in its pulp mill dispute with Argentina. Abreu was quoted as saying to Jobim that the CSD proposal could be dangerous for Uruguay, because "When small countries make a mistake they border on an existential crisis, but when the big ones make a mistake, they can simply forget about their commitment or resort to the use of force."

¶2. (C) MOD Bayardi told the Ambassador on May 21 that Uruguay was studying Jobim's proposal and he confirmed that Uruguay would attend the UNASUR meeting in Brasilia. He also indicated that if the CSD turned out to be no more than a "consultative body", then the GOU would likely be open to Uruguay's participation in it.

¶3. (C) Other military contacts we spoke with said they were reluctant about embracing the proposal because of concerns over sovereignty and Venezuelan participation. Some of the same contacts implied that the uniformed officer's opinion might not count for much in the decision of whether or not Uruguay should join CSD.
Baxter